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TALKIN' LOUD & CLEAR:

THE TRADE REVIEW THE YEAR!

Big names give us their take on 2024, while we focus on opportunities 2025 might bring – **inside!**

PICK YOUR WINNERS!

Our TRADE AWARDS are back – see page 19 now

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VOIGTLÄNDER
GERMANY
Since 1756

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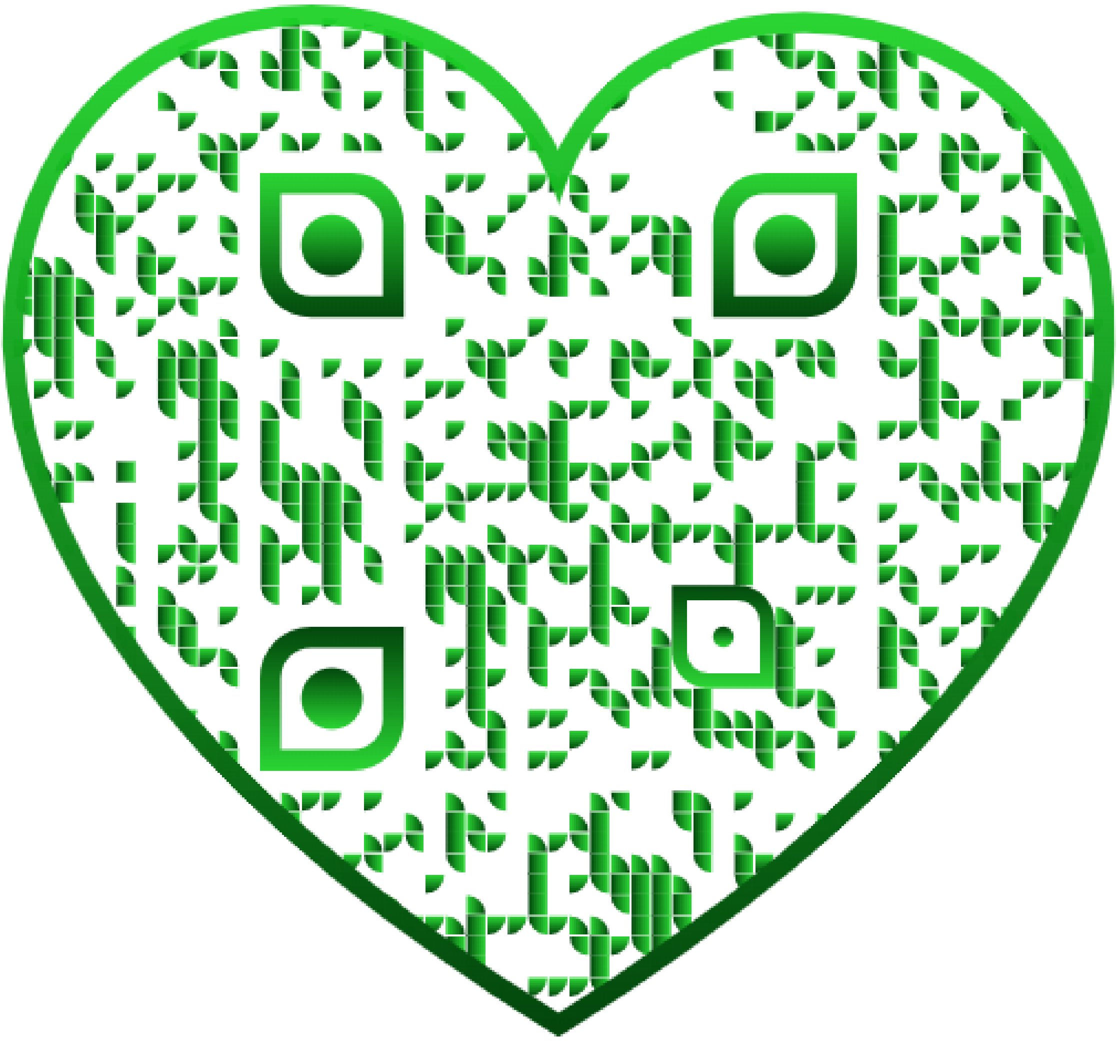

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WORLD
AWARDS
2024

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www.tipa.com

British Photo&Video Industry News
Published monthly by
LEGACY MEDIA ltd.

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Publisher's Office:
31 New Road, Richmond, Surrey TW10 7HZ.
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ISSN:
BPI News (Print) ....ISSN 2634-1344
BPI News (Online) ....ISSN 2634-1352

BPI News is a member of TIPA TECHNICAL IMAGE PRESS ASSOCIATION

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AN AUTHENTIC PICTURE

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Editorial portrait by Mustafa Morad

So, it looks like we finally made it to the end. If you're still with us, congratulations. There have been plenty of challenges to doing business in 2024, in a world post Covid, mid cost-of-living-crisis, war in Ukraine, Gaza and the Middle East, and pre the return of Trump to the White House. Add to this the increase in National Insurance for businesses from the recent controversial budget, and, for us, continued hikes in postal and print charges, and it feels like good news has been in short supply. But what do we know? As we're always seeking to stay positive while learning more, this issue we've enlisted the aid of some key voices in the UK photo and video trade to present their picture of 2024 for our Review of the Year. While manufacturers are understandably keen to talk up their latest products and successes, it's the voices of the retailers and distributors that perhaps feel the most authentic.

Sure, retailers might grumble about continued stock issues, but some of the challenges have come from shifting consumer habits, as well as technological changes and the continued rise in (and reliance on) Artificial Intelligence. Yes, AI is affecting both the art of photography and, via programs like ChatGPT, the art of writing, with tech firms and marketing graduates alike preferring to reduce practitioners of both arts to homogeneous creators of 'content'. At the same time marketeers appear increasingly seduced by online influencers. Tellingly, last month's TIPA survey of the photo industry found that influencers are in fact one of consumers' least trusted sources of information – a regular impression being they're all on payola. A generalisation perhaps, and there are a few YouTubers I enjoy myself who will flag up sponsorship of items, but journalist impartiality and integrity seem ever lower priorities nonetheless.

On a brighter note, we have The Society's annual convention and trade show early doors in January 2025, which many in the industry still insist on calling the SWPP, followed mere weeks later by The Photography and Video Show in March, which has switched locations from Birmingham to London. Following a buzzy show in 2024, we'll all be interested to see how the latter fares this year coming. For the video crowd we also have the Media Production & Technology Show in Olympia in May, which is adding an 'AI Media Zone' for 2025, as well as expanding up into the gallery area at the venue. We'll be attending all of these to bring you an authentic picture of our industry that dispenses with the fluff and sticks to the facts. In the meantime we wish you a successful Christmas and New Year and thank you for your readership and patronage these past 12 months.

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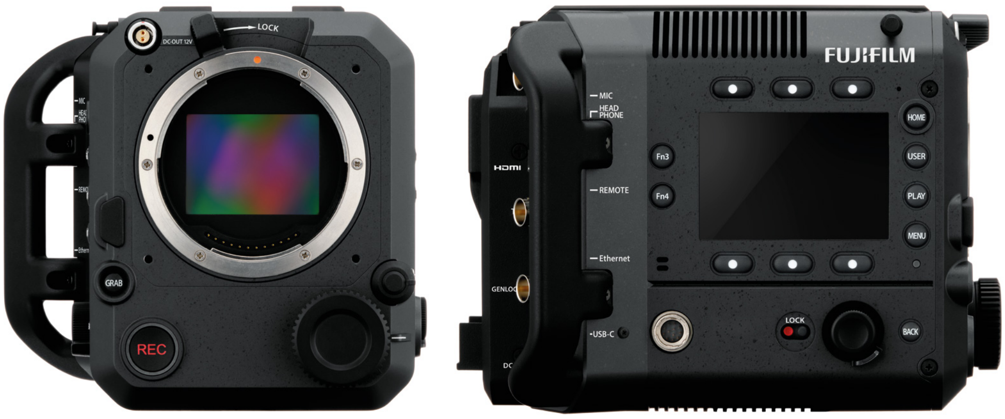
HOPE SPRINGS 'ETERNA'



Fujifilm has announced that its first ever dedicated filmmaking camera is currently 'in development'. Scheduled for release next year, the **Fujifilm GFX Eterna** *(right)* is promised to feature a large format GFX 102MP CMOS II HS sensor along with a X-Processor 5 image processing engine; both of which are currently integral parts of the brand's GFX100 II.

The manufacturer is pretty excited about its announcement, believing the forthcoming model 'is set to revolutionise film production', as it should combine the capabilities of Fujinon lenses with the advanced technology of the GFX camera series. In addition, it also tells us it is working on developing a power zoom GF lens optimised for the new camera, with a planned 32-90mm focal length, plus a G to PL lens mount adapter, to make use of lenses widely employed in film production.

Fujifilm has developed the GFX Eterna because, it believes, there is a growing need in the film production industry for high quality videos that can be produced quickly and inexpensively. It aspires to become a driving force in shaping a new era of filmmaking, with rigorous field tests ongoing, it claims. More info to follow on this interesting and timely development when we receive it!

FUJIFILM
House of Photography
Santa's Grotto

In related news, Elinchrom UK has supplied lighting for this year's Santa's Grotto at the **Fujifilm House of Photography** *(left)*, which opened mid-November upstairs at the store. The idea was that the Grotto provided a fun and interactive photo studio, with festive portrait set ups and space for crafting – plus, of course, the ability to meet Santa himself. Pulling out all the stops, a Christmas-themed post office enabling custom cards and letters to be posted to the big fella also featured. Hurry though if you want to check it out for yourself: Santa and his elves disappear back to the North Pole on Christmas eve. Turn to page 11 of this issue for more on the continuing collaboration between the two brands.

www.fujifilm.co.uk

FRESH GLOSS ON A CLASSIC

Claiming a 'Glossy Black' finish is much sought after on its products, Leica's issuing just such a shiny variant of its **M11** camera plus **Noctilux-M 50 f/1.2 ASPH** lens, as shown. First appearing on the brand's M3 camera back in 1963, it now claims the glossy black finish is the 'purest and strongest' expression of the classic Leica look. Over years of constant use the finish is said to 'evolve', as the brass underneath is partly exposed, said patina creating a distinctive individual look.

Here the camera's top plate dials and on/off switch feature the black glossy paint,

Leica
LEICA CAMERA
WETZLAR GERMANY

'Leica' is engraved on the top plate in a single stroke, plus there is a silver chromed shutter button as a nod to the historic M-Camera, while the traditional distinctive Leica red dot has been removed.

Meanwhile the lens features a round lens hood, front and rear lens caps with the same glossy black finish, and a red feet scale. The optic retails at a cool £6,900 SRP while the camera is an equally glacial £7,900.

www.leica-camera.com

FIRST AMONG SEQUELS

Both Nikon and Sony brands have second generation camera announcements this month.

Having decided to drop the spacings in its communiques about model names and numbers, the former is pushing its APS-C sensor incorporating **Z50II** to dealers, which went on sale just after we'd gone to press last month. Described by the manufacturer as 'a superb all-rounder for budding content creators', it features the same Expeed 7 image processor as the flagship Z9 and what's claimed to be the brightest EVF in its class.

For videographers it's also the first Nikon Z model to include a Product Review mode, said to be useful for vloggers who might want to subtly shift focus to objects they're showing in the foreground. Another first is a self-timer for video, allowing for a delay before recording starts. The 4K resolution camera can be tethered via cable to a smart device for live streaming too, with its 3.2-inch vari angle LCD no doubt coming in useful. With built-in flash and comfortable grip, the Z50II weighs a manageable 495g, body only, which retails at £849 SRP. Alternatively a kit that bundles the camera with a 16-50mm DX format lens is £999 SRP, or it's £1,199 SRP if adding an additional 50-250mm DX lens to the package.

Customers wanting something more powerful still should be directed to the **Sony A1 II** flagship mirrorless camera and directly compatible new **FE 28-70mm f/2 GM** lens, also announced November. The former incorporates a 50.1MP effective sensor and up to 30fps blackout-free continuous shooting with AF/AE tracking engaged. Innovations inherited from the Alpha 9 III include pre-capture of up to one second and an improved ergonomic design. Naturally there's an AI processing unit on board claimed to be able to deliver an advanced AI-based subject recognition performance, with improved image stabilisation of up to 8.5 stops and a multi-angle 3.2-inch LCD screen.

While the camera comes with a standard eyepiece fitted, we're told this can be swapped out for a new deep type padded eyepiece cup (model FDA-EP21) depending on user preference. For additional battery support the A1 II comes with a BC-ZD1 Dual Battery charger that can simultaneously fully charge two compatible batteries in 155 minutes, says Sony. Available this month (December), SRP is in the region of £6,300.

© Tom Oldham

"The original Alpha 1 was groundbreaking when it was released back in 2021; however, Sony has developed a range of new technologies since then," notes Sony Europe's Head of Marketing Yann Salmon Legagneur. "This was our opportunity to ensure our flagship camera includes all of our latest innovations."

The lens meanwhile is its maker's first G Master standard zoom lens with a constant f/2 aperture – said to make it ideal for both stills and video – while its focal range allows a variety of subjects to be captured without needing to swap it out. Close focusing is down to 0.38m throughout the zoom range, with Nano AR Coating II minimising ghosting and flare. With a newly developed 11-blade aperture unit, Super ED and ED glass elements reduce chromatic aberration. None of this comes cheap however and the FE 28-70mm f/2 GM has an SRP of £3,050.

www.nikon.co.uk
www.sony.co.uk

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LEXAR NEW RETAIL SPACE & PRODUCTS BOOST PROFILE

We visit the portable media expert's exciting new space in London's West End, check out its latest products and interview Lexar CEO Ryan Li and Deputy General Manager for Europe Grace Su about the current / future state of play

It's not often you get to sit with the CEO of a global company and pick their brains. But that's exactly what we were able to do last month. The occasion was the launch of a new (and so far, only) **Lexar** retail space within the flagship DJI | Hasselblad store on London's Regent Street. **DJI | Hasselblad** currently have a further store in Birmingham and, according to **Retail Director Allen Lu**, are seeking to expand their retail presence into further UK cities, as well as possibly Dublin or Berlin *(see more at dji-retail.co.uk)*.

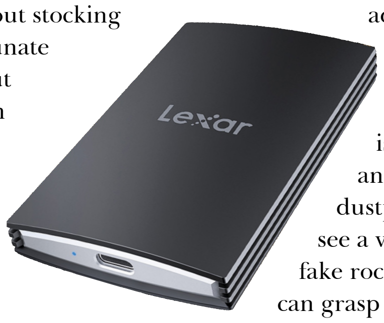
With Lexar's products selected as a perfect partner to DJI and Hasselblad, **Lexar CEO Ryan Li** jetted in from Shenzhen and its **Deputy General Manager for Europe Grace Su** visited from the Netherlands for this first 'D2C' direct-to-consumer retail venture.

Success 'on the cards': With its media solutions being a great fit for DJI and Hasselblad products, Lexar has its first direct-to-consumer retail presence on London's Regent Street. The brand's Grace Su and Ryan Li shown here visiting the store

Along with (and presented within) the space, Lexar has **three new exciting products** to showcase to dealers and customers. These include the world's first stainless steel SD memory cards in the **Lexar ARMOR GOLD SDXC UHS-II** Card and **Lexar ARMOR SILVER PRO SDXC UHS-II** Card. These are manufactured using 316 grade stainless steel, an alloy described as particularly resistant to corrosion and water damage. An IP68 rating means it'll survive being submerged.

Next up for mobile photographers and filmmakers is the **Lexar Professional Go Portable SSD** *(below)*, an ultra-compact hub providing the iPhone 15 and iPhone 16 Series or tablet with up to 2TB of recording capacity. Thirdly, its maker's ultra-rugged **ARMOR 700 Portable SSD** *(below)* is also making its UK debut. This device shows its mettle in possessing an IP66 waterproof rating and being able to withstand a drop from three metres in height.

While specialist photo retailers reading this should speak to distributor Transcontinenta UK about stocking the above, we were fortunate to get the lowdown about its latest kit directly from Lexar management and hear more about the brand's strategy.



"In the past the bigger part of our business has been based on the distribution model," says CEO Ryan Li. "But Lexar is a future-orientated consumer brand, where we respect and cherish the users' requirements. With every product we're trying to give them a better photographic experience, so it makes sense to develop this direct-to-consumer channel and collect first-hand user feedback.

"An example is that we just launched our new Professional Go Portable SSD and are promoting it by saying it's very slim and very small. But people cannot touch the product and see for themselves without a physical store with a product display."

The new Lexar products combine high technology with high performance, and it seems clear Lexar has not just consumers but also professional users in its sights. "For the past six years Lexar has been using the photo channel in the UK for that market, including Wex and Jessops, so the direct-to-consumer DJI store is a totally new concept for us," Grace Su admits. "Whereas in the past we'd use a lot of language to describe how good our ARMOR 700 Portable SSD is, such as its IP66 rating and that it's waterproof and dustproof, now consumers can see a very nice showcase featuring fake rocks, water and rain, and can grasp the concept and see why they might need it immediately. This is the value we thought DJI can bring us."

It transpires the seeds of the Lexar / DJI partnership were sown at tech show IFA this year, where the two brands had adjacent stands in a new Content Creator Hall. "We not only share customers, but also many distributors in many countries," reasons Ryan of the hook-up. "We're still keeping the traditional photo channel distribution route for our photo products, however, because this community is still very important and strong for Lexar. But while we're keeping this channel, we are always seeking new opportunities."

www.lexar.com

Check out Lexar's retail space at the DJI & Hasselblad store at 52 Regent Street, London W1B 5RL. **www.dji-retail.co.uk** & **www.lexar.com**

BE A PLAYER WITH LEICA'S CINE PLAY

The premium camera marque is all about luxury, so the fact it's getting into the mini projector market isn't perhaps the surprise it might once have been. We examine its latest covetable addition in the **Cine Play 1**

You've got your top-of-the-range Leica camera. Now what next? In these days of on-demand streaming services and box set binges, converting our homes into mini movie theatres isn't the big ask it once was, thanks to the availability of not only giant TV sets, but also mini digital projectors. The advantage here is that the displayed image can go as large as the available wall space – or portable screen – when in use, but the device itself can be packed away after the closing credits.

Leica surprised us last year with the introduction of its Cine 1 laser TV, with a projected image claimed at the time to be less fatiguing for the eyes than conventional TV displays. And now, to end 2024, its stylish **Cine Play 1 projector** has arrived.

BAUHAUS FOR YOUR HOUSE

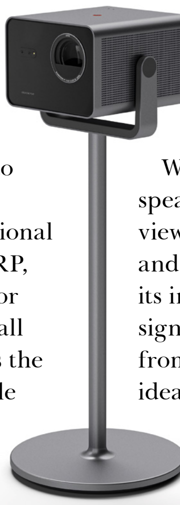
Slightly more affordable than the Cine 1, the £2950 Cine Play 1's minimalistic, compact, box-like design is said by Leica to have been Bauhaus inspired. Described as 'extremely versatile', it combines state of the art technology with its brand's renowned image quality. It boasts the inclusion of a Leica Summicron lens, innovative triple RGB laser technology and a brightness of up to 3000 ANSI lumens. With 4K resolution offered throughout its zoom range, screen sizes of between 65 inches and a whopping 300 inches are achievable.

Ensuring user-friendly plug 'n' play style operation, automatic alignment functions are claimed to remove the requirement for manual tuning, enabling the Cine Play 1 to be placed anywhere in a room.

Additionally available is the optional extra of a floor stand. For £335 SRP, this not only supports the projector but also aims to enhance the overall design aesthetic. A case in point is the discrete supply of power via a cable that connects via the baseplate of the stand. Thanks to an integrated safe and secure pin contact system in the stand itself, the projector requires no visible power cable.

LEICA AT YOUR SERVICE

Promising a service life of 25,000 hours, the premium image quality of the Cine Play 1 is supported by Leica's own 'LIO' (Leica Image Optimisation) image processing technology. We're told this tech employs special image optimisation algorithms to ensure natural colour rendition, nuanced colour gradation plus an 'outstanding' contrast ratio.

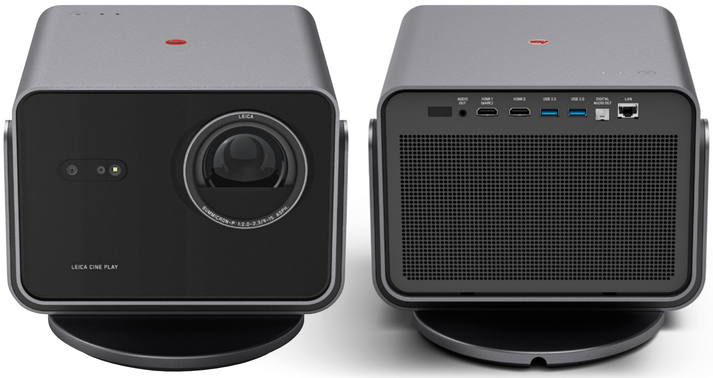


What's more, two built-in 15-watt speakers are provided to enhance the viewing experience with rich bass tones and crystal-clear sound. In fact, with its integrated DTS Virtual:X audio signal processing technology, the claim from Leica is that the device forms the ideal basis for the configuration of a true 3D surround sound system.

Connectivity options are presented by Apple Airplay, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi and several ports, including HDMI, USB and LAN. This enables easy streaming of content from smartphones, tablets, laptops or external drives. Smart Home integration and voice control are further offered, with its smart VIDAA operating system promising quick access to all the favourite streaming apps.

Finally, the Leica Cine Play 1's weight is such that it is portably convenient too – and can be set up without the need for a permanent installation – indoors as well as outdoors. A truly versatile device sure to ensure years of pleasurable and comfortable viewing.

www.leica-camera.com



Small in form factor, big in picture: Leica's Cine Play 1 looks as stylish as we'd expect from the brand, while on-board tech promises an 'outstanding' 4K image at a projected size between 65 and 300 inches

Leica Cine Play 1: 4K resolution mini projector with Bauhaus inspired design and 3000 ANSI lumens brightness. Optional stand is extra

PROFIT IN A FLASH WITH CAPIX'S STYLISH ACCESSORY

As teased last issue, the analogue photography experts at **Capix Ltd** have a shiny new **KEKS KF-01 compact flash** to boost dealers' profit and their customers' creativity alike…

KF-01
BESSA-R

KF… see! This compact new KEKS flash is a perfect blend of timeless design yet contemporary practicality, making it 2025's must have

Clearly there's profit to be made from doing things the traditional way, while utilising today's technology. As regular readers will be aware, **Capix Ltd**'s product line up is aimed at those shooting on or developing film who want to capitalise on the analogue photography revival – yet bring with it all the advantages of the 21st Century. No wonder dealers are getting in touch in ever increasing numbers, wanting to know more.

A key brand for the distributor is analogue accessories innovator KEKS. We've covered its KM-02 and KM-Q light meters for analogue and digital cameras in previous issues, and now Capix has an exciting new product to showcase in the **KEKS KF-01 compact flash**, promoted as 'more than a flash'.

Launching this month to round off 2024 with a bang, the KF-01 boasts a sleek aluminium finish and choice of a premium Satin Chrome or Satin Black appearance. This makes it a stand-out accessory, whether it's paired with an analogue or digital camera. Just one glance and dealers and photographer customers will recognise a perfect blend of timeless retro-cool design and contemporary practicality.

YOUR KEKS KF-01 CRIB SHEET:

Guide number:	GN12
Recycle time:	1.5 to 8 seconds
Battery life:	300 flashes
Power:	2x AAA batteries
Three output levels:	Full power, 1/2, or 1/3 power
Construction:	Aluminium (Satin Chrome or Satin Black finish)
Dimensions:	57x22x67mm
PC sync support:	Yes

A case in point: the KEKS KF-01 is compatible with analogue and digital cameras with a hot shoe or PC sync port, meaning versatility as well as style is assured. With a guide number of 12 the KEKS KF-01 is powered by 2x AAA batteries, providing up to 300 flashes.

With a recycle time of one to eight seconds, there are three power output levels: either full power, half power or 1/3 power. Featuring a lightweight yet strong aluminium chassis, overall dimensions are a compact 57x22x67mm.

In being designed for the film enthusiast, the unit features an easy-to-read exposure table at the back, inspired by the legendary Contax TLA140.

THE EXPERTS IN ANALOGUE

The above should make it crystal clear that if you want to maximise the benefit of the analogue photography revival for your own business, Capix's ever-growing product portfolio means it's the distributor to talk to.

As well as the exciting new KF-01 flash, Capix products also tapping into renewed enthusiasm for shooting on film include the **AGO film processor**, compatible with the Paterson Super System 4 development tank system, along with the **Aura 35 professional film scanner**, which can scan a large volume of film quickly at outstanding quality. Likewise receiving strong interest is the **Colenta 20 BW 31-7 Tank ECO film processor**. Its unique combination of advanced processor technology and Ilford chemistry expertise means it can effectively process a wide range of films exposed at differing ISO speed ratings, making for a step change in professional B&W film processing.

To order the KEKS KF-01 flash now or enquire about any or all of the above, dealers should get in touch with Capix on ***01480 472233*** *or email* ***info@capix.co.uk***

www.capix.co.uk

Order stock of the new KEKS KF-01 for analogue or digital cameras via Capix Ltd to meet expected demand in 2025!

SIGMA LENSES MAKE CANONS ROAR

Six long-awaited Sigma lenses for Canon RF Mount APS-C mirrorless cameras are here. We drill into the key features of each to share with your customers

©Jason Xu

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©Jason Xu

Tell your Canon RF Mount APS-C camera-owning customers six directly compatible Sigma lenses have arrived. Boasting a control algorithm to optimise AF drive communication speed and deliver a very fast performance, they further support AF-C, in-camera aberration correction on certain models, plus in-camera image stabilisation. Included as standard are a lens hood, front cap and rear cap – and all six are available now or are imminent.

Worth investigation, the **Sigma 18-50mm f/2.8 DC DN** *(right)* large aperture standard zoom lens is light, bright and exceptionally sharp. An everyday workhorse, at £479 SRP it sits within its maker's 'Contemporary' line up, as do the others here. The lens also supports Servo AF while, like the rest, its mount is rubber sealed against dust and water droplets, enabling use in many climates.

Delivering a 35mm equivalent range of 28.8mm to 80mm, with a constant f/2.8 aperture throughout its zoom range, minimum focusing distance is 12.1cm. Boasting a length of 74.5mm and a weight of 300g, its construction comprises 10 groups of 13 elements, including one SLD (Special Low Dispersion) and three aspherical lenses. Essentially this is an option that need never leave your customers' cameras.

Alternatively, the **10-18mm f/2.8 DC DN** *(right)* at £649 SRP is described as the world's smallest and lightest ultra-wide angle zoom for APS-C cameras. Enabling expressive images on the go, the lens features a unique aspherical element that reduces overall size while enhancing image quality. It also features a newly developed push-on petal type lens hood. Minimum focus distance is 11.6cm while weight is a manageable 270g. This should appeal to videographers seeking to mount camera and lens on a gimbal.

Arriving January 23rd, the ultra-wide **16mm f/1.4 DC DN** *(above, left)* is said to combine exceptional f/1.4 brightness with a compact body. Minimum focus distance is 25cm, while its 35mm equivalent focal length is 24mm. With a construction comprising 16 elements in 13 groups and a weight of 415g, Sigma believes this is the large diameter wideangle lens mirrorless owners have been waiting for. And at £389 SRP, who would argue?

Likewise compact bodied is the new **23mm f/1.4 DC DN** *(above, centre)*. Weighing just 345g, it's a fantastic option for carrying around every day. Also with a minimum focus distance of 25cm and a construction of 13 elements in 10 groups, this lens is likewise due to arrive January 23rd at £479. As with its siblings, it's big on delivering attractive 'bokeh' type effects and excellent resolving power at maximum aperture.

On sale right now for £319 SRP and similarly promising an 'outstanding' optical performance is the **30mm f/1.4 DC DN** *(right & below)*. This prime lens with an equivalent focal length of around 50mm comprises 9 elements in 7 groups, has a 30cm minimum focus distance and a weight of 285g. Naturally its bright/fast aperture can similarly be used for delivering beautiful 'bokeh' effects.

Lastly the **56mm f/1.4 DC DN** *(above & below)* is described by Sigma as a compact, lightweight and remarkable option for anyone needing the smallest mid tele lens in its class for APS-C mirrorless. With a build incorporating 10 elements in 6 groups, it offers Canon users a minimum focus distance of 50cm and weighs just 290g. Said to deliver brightness and 'bokeh' aplenty, SRP for this one is £419.

It's worth noting the above are already available via Sigma in six other mounts, namely L-Mount, Sony E-mount, Fujifilm X-Mount, Nikon Z Mount (excluding the 23mm), Canon EF-M Mount and Micro Four Thirds. All have been designed specifically for mirrorless camera systems and share an f/1.4 aperture and compact design.

"We know dealers and photographers have been asking for these Canon RF Mount lenses for a long time, and we believe our offerings make for a wise choice," enthuses Sigma UK General Manager Paul Reynolds. "Make sure to order sufficient stock to meet high expected demand." Contact your local Sigma rep to get ahead of the curve – and your competition – for 2025.

Sigmauk.com

©Jason Xu

©Ara Coutts

Six new Canon RF Mount compatible lenses are here now (or arriving soon) from Sigma. Get in touch with your local rep pronto!

EPSON'S 'P' SERIES MEANS PROFIT FOR DEALERS

Get in touch with official Epson re-seller the **DPS Group** now for advice on which of its 'P' series large format printers, including the **P5300**, **P6500**, **P7500**, **P8500** and **P9500**, can best suit your business and boost your bottom line well into 2025...

If you're a dealer or mini lab wanting to add an extra string to your business bow for 2025 by installing a large format printer, who you gonna call? Why Kent based **DPS Group** of course, long term official reseller for Epson's comprehensive SureColor P-series offerings.

Your options here start out with the 17-inch **SC-P5300**, which delivers prints up to A2 in size. This means it's perfect for photographers and photo retailers wanting to see profits rise via large format printing. A wide variety of media is supported, with a built-in roll unit and paper cassette provided.

Described as time saving and practical, the Wi-Fi enabled pro photo printer features an intuitive 4.3-inch LCD touchscreen. Output promises deeper blacks, enhanced contrast and tonality plus bronzing reduction in dark areas on glossy media. This is thanks to a trio of Epson technologies: its UltraChromePro10 ink set, Black Enhance Overcoat (BEO) for higher black density, wider blue colour gamut with violet ink, plus Carbon Black Mode for even darker blacks.

Alternatively, at 24 inches and 44 inches respectively, you might like to consider stepping up to the **SC-P7500** and **SC-P9500** large format printers. If your business is looking to print posters, fine art prints and indoor signage, both these options offer the advantage of a 12-colour UltraChrome PRO inkset – delivering Epson's widest ever colour gamut with 99% Pantone coverage and exceptional dynamic range – plus their maker's PrecisionCore MicroTFP print head to enable impressive print speeds. They're reliable as well as quick, as the machines' print heads use up to 800 nozzles for each colour, producing accurate dot placement and eliminating misprints. They're also claimed to be 2.5x faster than prior generations, while a 4.3-inch touch panel LCD allows for a range of configuration options.

Just 17: Start your large format journey with the 17-inch Epson SC-P5300 with UltraChromePro10 ink set, above, or seek advice on bigger options like the SC-P6500 and P8500, below

> "With Epson's P-series the potential to profit from photo printing in-house as we head into 2025 has never been higher."
> DPS Group MD Maneesh Patel

Working 9 to 5: The 24-inch SC-P7500, left, plus P9500, right, are reliable and quick performing options for those looking to up their large format printing game

EVOLUTION OF THE P-SERIES

Further options for producing high quality photo prints and posters come in the shape of new(er) kids on the block the **SC-P6500** and **SC-P8500**, again from Epson and likewise sized 24-inches and 44-inches respectively.

The two machines offer 2400x1200 dpi printing and UltraChrome Pro6 six colour ink sets that include grey ink, the output of which is claimed to be more than a match for competitors' 8-colour printers. Again, high output speeds yet low maintenance are two key promises, while a flat-sided design allows retailers to make maximum use of space, Wi-Fi connectivity allowing them to be operated from anywhere. Dual roll models in the series can load two different types of media or sizes, automatically switching between them.

A 4.3-inch touch panel screen provides manual access to printer settings and both are ready to go straight out of the box, with no assembly required.

"Epson's large format models can boost your business' productivity while providing the high-quality output the series is acclaimed for," enthuses DPS Group MD Maneesh Patel. "The potential to profit from photo printing in-house as we head into 2025 has never been higher, so talk to us now for advice on which would be your best fit."

Make it your New Year's resolution to get in touch with Maneesh and his team at DPS Group and discuss your large/wide format print requirements via ***sales@dpsb.co.uk*** *or phone* ***020 8466 7230****.*

www.thedpsgroup.co.uk
www.dpsb.co.uk

To ensure big profit via large format, contact the DPS Group to install Epson's P-series printers via **020 8466 7230** or **sales@dpsb.co.uk**

ELINCHROM & FUJIFILM COLLAB ILLUMINATES BENEFITS FOR DEALERS

Last month Elinchrom UK became the Fujifilm House of Photography's 'official lighting provider'. BPI News attended the first joint workshop, learning how Elinchrom's expertise can help your own store

FUJIFILM
House of Photography
stax
The Gallery

Team work makes the dream work: L to R: Elinchrom UK Sales Director Mark Cheetham, Elinchrom CEO Simon Whittle, Elinchrom UK Technical Director Simon Burfoot and Elinchrom UK Marketing Manager Julian Amoah

FUJIFILM
House of Photography
elinchrom
What's your next adventure
Elinchrom THREE

Since establishing its own direct-to-dealer distribution at the start of this year, Elinchrom UK has been very proactive. Under the guidance of **Sales Director Mark Cheetham** and **Technical Director Simon Burfoot** it's been reconnecting with trade partners, getting its gear into photographers' hands and driving retail sales via training days and workshops.

The big news is that last month it became 'official lighting provider' for Fujifilm's House of Photography. A launch event utilising the store's studio space illuminated just how such collaborations can benefit dealer and lighting brand alike.

Mark explained how customers can get hands on and test Elinchrom's flagship products with a live model, exploring creative lighting setups and techniques with expert guidance from Simon. The thinking is that if photographers already understand how to use the kit, they're more likely to buy it. Such events also encourage loyalty to both brand and dealer – a win/win scenario.

Elinchrom CEO Simon Whittle flying in specially from Switzerland further underlined the importance with which this company treats its partnerships.

"I'm really excited for this new chapter for Elinchrom UK," Simon told us. "Here we have two brands with common shared values, looking to empower photographers with tools to help them make their best pictures, be more creative and elevate their craft. For Elinchrom this is a great space and opportunity. As a Swiss company we strive for innovation and I think Fujifilm does too. We have a lot of similarities and I'm happy to be part of this story, so thank you Fujifilm."

Mark Cheetham added: "It's been 10 months since we started Elinchrom UK. First we had to get our UK dealer network sorted out. It's been really important to get that back on track. And a huge part of our effort, which Simon Burfoot's been a part of, is training. Every week we train dealers, we train photographers. We also have great relationships with the SWPP and others, which we're hoping to expand on. That's all down to Simon.

"Another big part of what we do is getting people comfortable with using flash. Having this space is another chapter in that story. It's a place for everyone to use and now it's got Elinchrom lighting in it, I'd like to think the space has just got a little bit better. Of course one of the great things about being here is that we've a nice buy-in to excellent camera kit, including the Fujifilm GFX, that people can use."

As part of the half-hour flash lighting demo on the day we attended, Simon Burfoot highlighted that he is still the only qualified lighting tutor in the UK, plus explained what makes Elinchrom's own gear, including the FIVE light and the modifiers he was using, so special.

"Our softboxes are made from premium material. The lining inside is very contrast-y when not shooting with a diffuser on the front. That allows us to work out whether for our shoots we're going to use hard light – a very small light source in relation to the subject – or a big light source, which gives us a much softer, more natural, diffused light. This is kinder to the subject's skin and allows us to get things right in camera. Our softboxes use a silky material that gives a beautifully soft diffused light."

While the above provides a quick impression of what to expect from an Elinchrom demo, of course it is best experienced in person. Details of future Elinchrom events can be found at **www.elinchrom.co.uk** – with the trade strongly encouraged to get in touch (details below) if they'd like to speak about collaborations of their own.

Arrange an Elinchrom workshop or event at your store to drive sales via **support@elinchrom.co.uk** or **0333 358 2444**

MAC GROUP EU: A ‘SOUND’ CHOICE FOR DEALERS

As we enter 2025, the distributor is offering the trade and customers bags of choice via the **Tenba** brand, as well as sound options from **Saramonic**

Luxury for cinematographers: The revamped Tenba Cineluxe v2 collection claims to have made some great bags even better, with backpacks and shoulder bags, as shown, now available via MAC Group EU

You might think that just about every improvement that could be made to camera bags has been made. Well, think again. The tagline for the new **Tenba Cineluxe v2** collection is ‘just when you thought we couldn’t make it better, we made it better.’

How so? Aimed at filmmakers and cinematographers, and updated after a decade in existence, the Cineluxe v2 collection has added new features alongside new sizes. There’s a new **Backpack 16** for compact cine cameras like the Sony FX3, plus the **Shoulder Bag 24 Hightop** *(right)* to accommodate the largest cine cameras, such as the Sony Burano complete with rig. The latter is its most requested bag size, says Tenba.

New Cineluxe v2 features include ‘MOLLE’ (Modular Lightweight Load-Carring Equipment) webbing, providing the ability to attach extra gear, plus Tenba’s exclusive hidden AirTag tracker pocket, so owners can always keep tabs on their bag. Internal materials have been upgraded to improve durability, while the backpacks boast a new built-in harness cover for protection should it come into contact with a wet or dirty surface. Speaking of which, every bag now includes a ‘WeatherWrap’ reversible silver/black rain cover.

Creators who travel a lot should be directed to the international carry-on compatible **Shoulder Bag 16** and **21**, the **Backpack 16** *(below)* and **21**, plus the Roller 21. Hear a rear trolley strap can slide over the extending handle of a rolling case, allowing for more convenient and comfortable transportation. Bottom mounted straps (only on the shoulder bags) allow the bag to be secured vertically in order to fit through tight spaces and doorways.

A ’doctor bag’ style opening provides access via one quick zipper down the middle, allowing cameras to be stored with a baseplate and microphone attached, while soft padded wraps and zip pockets protect delicate lenses. Similarly protective are Tenba’s exclusive dividers with aluminium reinforcement making them rigid yet flexible. For extra security, the main compartment zip can be fitted with a standard luggage lock. Suggested pricing for the collection ranges from £199 for the Cineluxe v2 Shoulder Bag 16 in black to £399 for the Roller 24 in black.

SARAMONIC’S ‘SMART’ OPTION

MAC Group Europe isn’t all about accessories for high-end cine gear however – it also has a new solution for any content creator shooting on a smartphone. The **Saramonic BlinkME U2** *(right)* is described as a cutting-edge two-person wireless microphone for smartphones. A unique sales feature here is a customisable screen that can display a logo or image of the user’s choice. This could be a means of promoting a brand, an organisation, or even act as a name badge.

Saramonic’s device is compatible with USB-C and Lightning devices and features two touchscreen transmitters with built-in omnidirectional microphones. The transmitters offer high-definition recording, active noise cancellation and the ability to customise settings via its unique user interface. With 8GB of storage the audio can be recorded on the microphones and onto a smartphone simultaneously, providing a back up copy in the rare occurrence of an interruption of the signal between the Mic (TX) and the Receiver (RX). The dual channel receivers of the BlinkME U2 support both mono and stereo output for flexible audio recording, plus the system includes a USB-C charge-through input and a 3.5mm headphone output for monitoring. Professional grade audio recording is further enhanced by a 3000mAH charging case, magnetic clips, mounts and furry windshields. Finally, a Saramonic app offers advanced control and customisation. Dealers will agree that the above really does sound great.

Get in touch with your local MAC Group Europe rep now about Tenba and Saramonic to boost your profits into 2025.

Alternatively call ***01902 255500*** *or email* ***info@macgroupeu.com***

www.macgroupeu.com

Contact MAC Group Europe to order sufficient stock of Tenba and Saramonic via **info@macgroupeu.com** or **01902 255500**

MACgroup

Creating
What's Next
Saramonic

MAC Group Europe proudly distributes award-winning brands backed by great service and support. For more information on how we can support your business during the festive season and into the year ahead visit **www.macgroupeu.com**

2024: THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The past 12 months have gone by so fast they've been difficult to get a handle on, so we've enlisted the aid of key figures from the UK photo and video trade to give us their take on 2024

In many ways 2024 has felt like a continuation of the past couple of years, with the war in Ukraine, the bloodshed in Gaza and the Middle East, plus the continuing cost of living crisis at home and the price of almost everything we use and consume going up and up. And up.

Set against this challenging backdrop, our industry has still managed to pull off successful launches and shows. So, to accentuate the positive, let's re-cap with our BPI News issue-by-issue trade highlights from this year, weaving in comment from those at the coalface of the photo/video industry.

FEB / MARCH 2024 • £5

British Photographic Industry news

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SPRING LOADED!

A packed issue featuring the hottest new products & services launched in & around The Photography & Video Show, as we preview March's main event

The Photography & Video Show

FILM'S NOT DEAD: Analogue photography reanimated – *inside!*

IN THIS ISSUE...

P 6 DIRECT SERVICE
We meet the newly appointed team heading up Elinchrom's direct to dealer distribution service for the UK, shedding light on its latest hero products

P 10 GOOD ON PAPER
PermaJet's photographer-friendly inkjet paper range has begun the year by winning two major trade awards for not only its product but also its service

P 12 BAG SOME SALES
Distributor MAC Group Europe previews new Nanlite innovations plus bags from Tenba & Shimoda in advance of its Photography & Video show appearance

P 16 STRICTLY ANALOGUE
Take advantage of renewed interest in film capture and processing techniques by checking out a quartet of Capix's brand new analogue oriented offerings

FEBRUARY / MARCH

The big news in our first new issue of 2024 was that Elinchrom had established its own UK based direct to dealer distribution service (see page 11 of this edition for the very latest on that), while the former Tetenal was due to make its debut as Dupli at The Photography Show. As regarded saleable new kit for dealers, there was OM Digital Solution's revamped flagship OM-1 Mark II, with MAC Group EU and Transcontinenta UK both showcasing gear they'd have on their stands at TPS. Elsewhere PermaJet was celebrating awards from the trade for its various inkjet papers, while Hahnemuhle revealed the high-performance papers and professional hosts for its takeover of the Photo Studio Stage at TPS. With traditional media very much in the frame, Capix also talked us through its analogue photography solutions for dealers and their customers in the same issue and Lumesca Group illuminated the appeal of Hobolite's portable LEDs.

APRIL / MAY 2024 • £5

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Photo Trade in Bloom

BPI News showcases a huge amount of new camera, lens and accessory releases – heralding a welcome return to form for our photo industry

The Photography & Video Show

FULL REPORT & ANALYSIS – INSIDE!

IN THIS ISSUE...

P 6 G'DAY SUNSHINE
Introducing a sustainable, ethical and innovative new camera bag and accessory range from Australian brand Urth, available now via Digital Distribution Ltd

P 8 TAKE FIVE WITH KENRO
Two photo / video tripods, a monopod, a film scanner and a compact powerhouse of an LED light – five must-stock new offerings from Kenro

P 9 TRUE COLOURS
The Lumesca Group's well-received monitor calibration tools & your own sales potential alike receives a boost with its easy-use Calibrite Display 123

P 14 POWERING SALES
Just one of the award-winning Transcontinenta UK's many brands, Lexar's lineup makes it the go-to for data storage devices & high capacity memory cards

APRIL / MAY

With spring truly sprung, and The Photography Show been and gone, we had a full report as usual. We highlighted the fact that, to us at least, it felt the busiest and buzziest since 2019. The big and somewhat surprising news this month was Nikon's acquisition of cinema camera manufacturer RED, that Photopia Hamburg was being axed, that a new UK show in Click Live was due to debut in June, and that Fujifilm photo booths were making in-roads into teenage girls' favourite store, Primark. In terms of new kit, Fujifilm's X100VI or 'Six' mirrorless camera was already proving a soaraway success, with stock levels unable to meet frenzied demand. At the very high end, Hasselblad was toting a 100-megapixel modular 907X & CFV 100C medium format camera, claiming it as its most compatible model to date. And Australia's Urth were showing us that camera bags shouldn't cost the literal Earth.

Theo Georghiades, General Manager Imaging Solutions, Fujifilm UK

Having been at Fujifilm for 25 years, I've been involved in some very special launches, and 2024 has been exceptional for new products and initiatives. In January, Fujifilm celebrated its 90th anniversary and it's been a year to remember! We knew the X100VI was going to be popular, but nobody expected it to explode in the way it has done. Nine months on it's still the hottest product on the market that everyone is talking about, which is fantastic for the Fujifilm brand. Across the board, it's been another outstanding 12 months for us as the brand continues to grow across many areas of imaging. I'm very proud of the work my team has achieved across so many varied projects and activities, which continues to take the brand from strength to strength. I wish everyone in the industry a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year… I very much look forward to seeing what 2025 has to bring.

> "As an exclusively Nikon-only dealer, we concentrated on offsetting any potential challenges by promoting Grays of Westminster constantly on all social media channels. Our policy for 2024 was to promote until the floors caved in and then some more!"
>
> Gray Levett, Owner, Grays of Westminster

Think our round up misses out on any crucial photo / video industry related moments in 2024, or care to share your own

> I fear 2025 is going to be tougher. Unlike the thousands of farmers protesting outside Westminster, the small voice of the few of us left in the photo retail industry will go unheard. So I use this trade publication to appeal to our brands and suppliers to start thinking about creative marketing to drive the interest and passion of being a photographer, videographer or content creator, rather than marketing models based on price or discounts."
>
> David Parkinson, MD Wilkinson Cameras

Paul Reynolds, General Manager, Sigma UK

2024 was another great year for us. As well as our entrance into Canon's RF Mount with a line of fast APS-C optics, we launched six exceptional new mirrorless lenses including the 28-45mm F1.8 and the 28-105mm F2.8, both of which became instant favourites with photographers and film-makers. Our commitment to quality and innovation was also recognised with a bagful of prestigious awards, celebrating our dedication to excellence in the imaging technology.

But even with these fantastic products on the shelves, 2024 was not without its challenges. Continued economic instability and high inflation has impacted consumer confidence, creating a difficult trading environment for us and our partners. Notwithstanding, I have been so impressed with how resilient and adaptable the imaging industry has proved to be through these difficult times.

As we look to 2025, I am hopeful of calmer waters ahead, and look forward to another year of innovative and versatile products that will help photographers unlock the door to more creative and eye-catching images.

Danny Williams, Managing Director, Swains

As a wholesale distributor supplying a broad range of product to the photo independent channel we are arguably well placed to identify which category of products over the year has performed well. Our experienced head office and external sales team are always available to share this information and to offer advice to our customers at any time.

At the beginning of this year we were apprehensive about the expectation of further growth, following the previous couple of post Covid years. However we have been delighted by the majority of our product categories continuing to do extremely well. Particular highlights are the continued demand for 35mm film, instant cameras, digital cameras, frames and general battery business, which is on the increase.

Looking forward to next year, it is difficult not to reflect on the October budget which was clearly very disappointing for all businesses. Added to that, we are also faced with further unpredictable political influences which will potentially also have an impact on business!

Although there are clearly tough challenges ahead, it is important to stay positive. We will approach next year with our usual enthusiasm and optimism, building on the successes of 2024 and implementing firm plans to introduce additional new product lines which will create greater sales opportunities for our customers. One thing we would like to see in 2025 is a marketing mission to encourage consumers to make more prints. In the industry we're fully aware that any unprinted image is potentially a lost image. Unfortunately trying to get that message across is never easy!

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a healthy and successful New Year.

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TIPA AWARDS WINNERS: DISCOVER WHO WON WHAT FOR 2024 & WHY IT COULD BOOST YOUR SALES POTENTIAL!

SEEKING FRESH OPPORTUNITIES

The world of photography is ever changing & evolving, reflected in new gear to expand your market & your customers' creative horizons – **INSIDE!**

IN THIS ISSUE...

PAGE 10 GET A HOT LEAD We direct you to a couple of potential & pleasingly different money-spinners from the Lumesca Group distributed Tether Tools and Hobolite brands

PAGE 15 WORD TO THE WISE Every manufacturer & retailer wants to target content creators. MAC Group Europe's new Saramonic wireless microphone system allows you to do just that

PAGE 17 FEEDING IMAGINATION Why Hahnemühle's Natural Line & Sustainable Photo Papers are a great fit for an on-going photography project convincing us to care about how our food is grown

PAGE 20 BUSINESS ADVICE BPI News explores the hot topics of sustainability and Artificial Intelligence – and the impact both are having on photo businesses and our industry at large

JUNE

In a challenging year this standalone monthly issue had the theme of 'seeking fresh opportunities'. We had a hot lead for dealers from Tether Tools, investigated the impact of AI on photo businesses and our industry at large, and how content creators were in the sights of MAC Group Europe with new additions to its Saramonic audio range. On our news pages Canon was teasing its much-trailed EOS R1 flagship mirrorless while, fast becoming the trade's hardest working camera marque, Fujifilm had a new medium format GFX100S II camera body and sundry new lenses to go with it. Interestingly the Yashica brand was saying 'I'm Back' with what it was

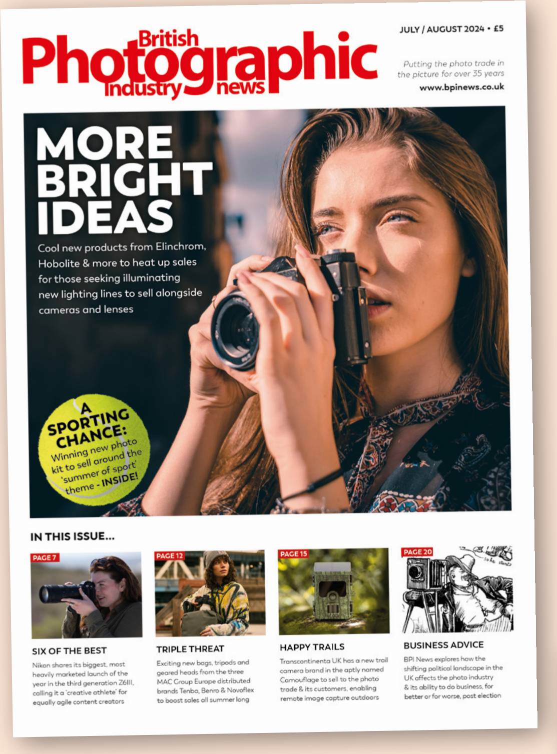
> As the photographic industry, we continue to be impacted by both the economy and technological advancements in both video and stills photography. What remains encouraging is the fact that our core customer, the hobbyist/enthusiast, continues to invest in their passion."
>
> Simon Coleman, Managing Director, Transcontinenta UK

Hazel Soper, Group Marketing Manager, The Photography & Video Show

This year has felt more buoyant for the imaging market. We've seen launch after launch, not just from the big camera brands, but from right across the industry. The show back in March saw big names like Adobe make a comeback and, based on feedback, our visitors - pro and consumer alike - spent more on the show floor than the previous few years; all really positive signs for the year to come. Looking forward to 2025, the show's move to Excel in London has been received very well by the brands. We're all excited to be in a new location, right on the river, in one of the most photographed cities in the world!

opinion on where we're all headed in 2025? Get in touch with us and your peers via **info@bpinews.co.uk** claiming as the world's smallest mirrorless camera, we looked at two TIPA Award winning Sigma lenses off the back of our centre spread revealing practically every bit of kit TIPA's judges had praised this year, plus field tested a pair of anti-shake equipped water resistant Fujifilm binoculars that any sensible dealer would be wise to stock alongside traditional photo kit.

> Continued economic instability and high inflation has impacted consumer confidence, creating a difficult trading environment for us and our partners. Notwithstanding, I have been so impressed with how resilient and adaptable the imaging industry has proved to be through these difficult times."
>
> Paul Reynolds, General Manager, Sigma UK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MORE BRIGHT IDEAS
Cool new products from Elinchrom, Hobolite & more to heat up sales for those seeking illuminating new lighting lines to sell alongside cameras and lenses
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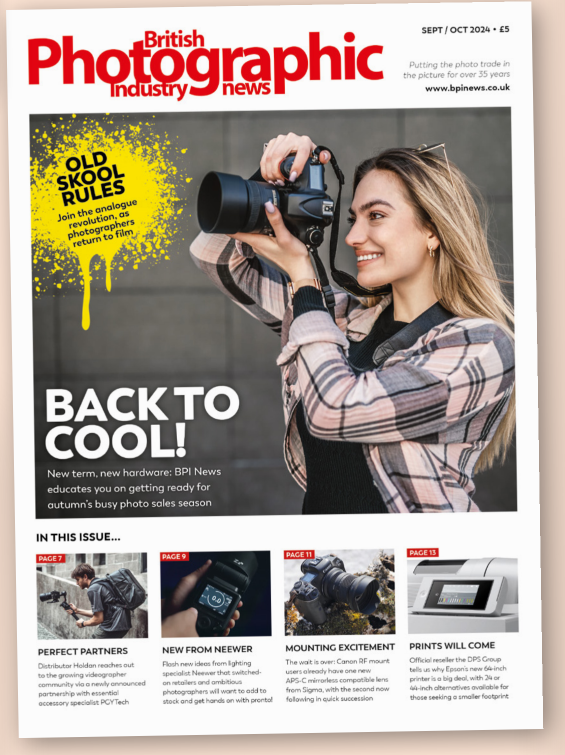
PAGE 20
BUSINESS ADVICE
BPI News explores how the shifting political landscape in the UK affects the photo industry & its ability to do business, for better or for worse, post election

JULY / AUGUST

Our annual summer special lead with a news item of the third generation Nikon Z6III which the brand was very proud to call its biggest launch of the year, with a marketing budget to match. A 'triple threat' came in the shape of new gear from distributor MAC Group EU's Tenba, Benro and Novoflex brands, while Transcontinenta UK was promising happy trails with a new Camouflage trail camera brand. This was unexpectedly also a UK election month, so our Business Advice spread focused on the impact political turmoil and a possible change in government might have on the photo / video industry. Continuing its hard work, Fujifilm revealed a duo of new Instax cameras, while Canon introduced a new RF mount cinema camera in its EOS C400. Elinchrom UK opened the doors to the trade at its new service centre in Royal London Docks, and we reported back from a sweltering Click Live show up in Warwickshire. Talking of hot weather, this also seemed a good time for the DPS Group to showcase Epson's direct-to-garment printers as perfect for churning out personalised T-shirts and beach bags, while we got in line for Leica's latest covetable compact in the D-Lux 8, despite it being way above our pay grade.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OLD SKOOL RULES
Join the analogue revolution, as photographers return to film
BACK TO COOL!
New term, new hardware: BPI News educates you on getting ready for autumn's busy photo sales season
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Flash new ideas from lighting specialist Neewer that switched-on retailers and ambitious photographers will want to add to stock and get hands on with pronto!
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PRINTS WILL COME
Official reseller the DPS Group tells us why Epson's new 64-inch printer is a big deal, with 24 or 44-inch alternatives available for those seeking a smaller footprint

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER

After a bit of a lull over the summer we were 'back to cool' for a new term. Newly appearing in our pages was distributor Holdan with a videographer targeted range of PGYTech bags, while another new name to us in Neewer lighting accessories showcased its flash new product ideas for photographers and dealers alike. There was mounting excitement among the trade for the first Sigma branded, Canon RF mount compatible lenses arriving on the market, while Canon itself finally whipped the covers off its formerly shadowy EOS R1 and brought EOS R5 Mark II and Cinema EOS C80 playmates along with it. Barely a day goes by without some press release screaming 'content creator' at us, and this month that was the audience being targeted by Sony's new ZV-E10 II. More old school and charming was an Instax Mini Evo

Simon Coleman,
Managing Director, Transcontinenta UK

As the photographic industry, we continue to be impacted by both the economy and technological advancements in both video and stills photography. What remains encouraging is the fact that our core customer, the hobbyist/enthusiast, continues to invest in their passion. It is our pleasure to represent a number of specialist brands within the sector and our aim is to continue to add value to them in respect of marketing and technical support. We are pleased to have a sales focused team on the ground, targeted to support sales across the photo channel. Thank you for your continued support into 2025.

David Parkinson,
MD Wilkinson Cameras

This year has been a challenge. Fortunately, our industry continues to develop some fantastic products, and the technological improvements are just amazing. This brings in new customers, when we can get the stock of course, and has driven new business. However, the prohibitive cost of some of these cameras and lenses, combined with a lack of consumer confidence and the cost of living crisis means 2024 has been no record breaker!

I fear 2025 is going to be tougher. Unlike the thousands of farmers protesting outside Westminster, the small voice of the few of us left in the photo retail industry will go unheard. So I use this trade publication to appeal to our brands and suppliers to start thinking about creative marketing to drive the interest and passion of being a photographer, videographer or content creator, rather than marketing models based on price or discounts. Our business is about what we can do with the gear, how we create and the way we tell our stories.

Business may not have been a record breaker in 2024, but it does take the award for the greatest number of price promotions. The sheer volume this year has been overwhelming. Apart from the work they create, the see-saw pricing effect devastates sales rates and creates reactionary marketing activities, which contribute little to the overall prosperity of the business. Can we please see a more sensible ongoing pricing model and planned / targeted promotions, allowing us time to capitalise on the benefits and pleasure our products can give to our customers.

Like the farmers, 2025 will bring us all a larger wage bill, a bigger business rates invoice and a huge tax liability. So plan early, act now, be tough, have a great Christmas and come out fighting in the New Year.

Think our round up misses out on any crucial photo / video industry related moments in 2024, or care to share your own

> “Although there are clearly tough challenges ahead, it is important to stay positive. We will approach next year with our usual enthusiasm and optimism, building on the successes of 2024 and implementing firm plans to introduce additional new product lines which will create greater sales opportunities for our customers.”
>
> Danny Williams, Managing Director, Swains

Julian Harvie, Marketing Director, Nikon Northern Europe

While 2024 has been another challenging year for our industry, faced with the realities of the cost-of-living crisis and increasingly wallet-conscious consumers, it’s been a wild ride for Nikon with the launch of yet another gold standard FX camera, the Z 6III, the significant APS-C upgrade in the Z50II and, of course, our global acquisition of Hollywood filmmaking royalty, RED.

We continue to be blown away by the passion and talent of our Nikon Ambassadors and Creators and receive so much insight and wisdom from their close collaboration. For 2025, we’re excited about expanding our fanbase into more and varied creative audiences and being an ally to all visual artists, including those just starting out, experienced pros, photography purists, dedicated filmmakers and everything in between.

Nancy Janes, Managing Director, Hahnemuhle UK

I started my career with Kodak in 1988 and was delighted to re-join the photographic industry again in 2022. For me, 2024 represented the turning point of in person events, where passionate, creative like-minded people were energised to come together again, to share, learn and collaborate. The wonderful events of 2024 are too many to mention. But the consistent theme, regardless of the experience of the attendees, was the pride and thrill of people sharing their ‘content’ in print. The emotional connection with ink on paper is thousands of years old and thankfully that shows no signs of abating.

Gray Levett, Owner, Grays of Westminster

Over the past year a number of challenges have assailed the photographic trade. How does one cope? Challenges can present themselves regularly to any retailer in different ways, from the unexpected pandemic in 2020 to a sudden economic change in the world markets.

As an exclusively Nikon-only dealer, we concentrated on offsetting any potential challenges by promoting Grays of Westminster constantly on all social media channels. Our policy for 2024 was to promote until the floors caved in and then some more! One example is our YouTube channel, which began in March 2020 with just four or five regular viewers logging onto our broadcasts. Since then, our weekly live streams and podcasts have garnered over 7 million views, with 767,000 watched hours and over 91 million impressions. In addition, we held Nikon in-store days at our premises in 2024, which were always very well attended.

My objective for Grays of Westminster has always been to create a shop that is an elegant oasis of old-fashioned service. One of the high points of 2024 was winning Amateur Photographer’s Platinum Good Service Award which we have achieved eight years in a row. We consider that the shop you buy your camera from is almost as important as the camera you buy.

Next year we will be celebrating our 40th Anniversary. As for the future? Well the only way to predict the future is to create it – and to offer the finest service you can.

bundle released to celebrate Fujifilm’s 90th anniversary, while it also had a trendy new portable printer in the Instax Mini Link. A pair of new GoPro’s continued to signal the brand’s dominance of the action camera market.

British Photo&Video Industry News

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SURE SHOTS!

Enjoy STEADY SALES with a host of must-stock products from brands showcasing innovative wares for photographers & videographers – inside!

GREAT CONTENT! New lightweight cameras, lighting, lenses & tripods to capitalise on the ‘content creator’ boom

IN THIS ISSUE...

PAGE 7 MODULAR MARVELS Examine this ultra compact, ultra innovative new lens system for Sony E mount camera users, launched by Samyang and distributed to the trade via Holdan

PAGE 8 POWER TRIO Offering stability, portability & versatility for photographers plus steady sales for photo specialists alike are three ‘Super’ Benro products via MAC Group Europe

PAGE 11 SIX OF THE BEST ...Tamron lenses for Nikon Z camera users, available to retailers & customers via Transcontinenta UK. Five zooms & a ‘hero’ prime make for a compelling offering

PAGE 13 ILLUMINATING VISION Elinchrom announces an exciting new partnership that will see it demonstrate a seamless integration of its lighting solutions with Fujifilm’s world-class cameras

NOVEMBER

It was all change for our decade-old masthead as we snuck the word ‘Video’ onto our cover. The change signifies the increased importance of the feature, not only as regards the functionality of the cameras and accessories being released but also the change in how, and to whom, they’re now being marketed. A case in point came November with Nikon’s announcement it was supplying video specific LUTs (Look Up Tables) for those recording with its mirrorless cameras, while Panasonic introduced the DJI ready Lumix S5D in the same issue. Videographers were also the focus for three new Canon RF mount lenses, while Holdan introduced a modular Samyang Remaster Slim lens series for Sony E-Mount camera owning customers, a series also famed for its video performance. Slightly more traditional were new camera bodies from Leica and Fujifilm, with the latter’s X-M5 being introduced as the new entry level model at a cool £799 SRP body only. Our survey of 3,000+ readers in association with TIPA produced the interesting response that influencers are less trusted for their opinions than print magazines. Elsewhere third party lens manufacturer Tamron revealed it now had six compatible lenses for the Nikon Z system and Elinchrom announced it was now official lighting provider for Fujifilm’s House of Photography.

> “This year has felt more buoyant for the imaging market. We’ve seen launch after launch, not just from the big camera brands, but from right across the industry. The show back in March saw big names like Adobe make a comeback and, based on feedback, our visitors - pro and consumer alike - spent more on the show floor than the previous few years.”
>
> Hazel Soper, Group Marketing Manager, The Photography Show

opinion on where we’re all headed in 2025? Get in touch with us and your peers via **info@bpinews.co.uk**

5 YEARS OF 5-STAR SERVICE

Staffed by familiar industry faces, **Transcontinenta UK** hit the ground running in late 2019 and has continued to evolve and adapt in an ever-shifting retail landscape. It's attracted a wealth of big-name brands and won BPI News Trade Awards in the process. Now, as it celebrates its fifth anniversary, **MD Simon Coleman** re-caps on its advantage for dealers

Time moves so fast that many in the trade may be unaware that Transcontinenta UK is currently celebrating five years of trading. Its success has been built on its reputation as a value-added distributor of photo and video brands to dealers in the UK and Ireland, as the local branch office of the Netherlands based Transcontinenta Group, which has headquarters near Schiphol Airport. Based in Slough, Transcontinenta UK is similarly close to many major transport arteries, while its privately owned parent group has a further office in Germany.

"In our five years of operation, Transcontinenta UK has grown from humble beginnings to a team of dedicated, knowledgeable and enthusiastic professionals, spread across sales, marketing, category management, administration, logistics and customer service," Transcontinenta UK MD Simon Coleman enthuses. With many familiar industry faces and names making up the local team, he adds that, incredibly: "We've a collective 263 Years experience in the photo / video channels!"

Regular readers will be up to speed with the fact that Transcontinental UK is adding new brands to its distribution portfolio all the time, currently totalling 25 in strength. Most of these are already leading brands in the field of photography, video, sport optics and mobile connectivity. "Our focus has always been, and still is, on the sales and distribution of photographic-related brands towards retailers, professional photographers, and business-to-business users," Simon continues. The aim is to help support growth within dealers' businesses.

AWARD WINNING DISTRIBUTOR

"In our short history we have been honored and delighted to have been awarded the BPI News Distributor of Year Award in 2022 and 2023," notes Simon. "We would like to thank our dealer partners for their continued business support. Secondly, we would like to thank our brand partners and our Transcontinenta colleagues for their continued efforts."

Standalone, Transcontinenta UK has grown into a €10M company in terms of yearly revenues, with the wider group represented by revenues in excess of €65M per annum.

In short, the message is that the Transcontinenta Group remains a modern, dynamic company and a reliable business partner, its logistics distribution equipped with the latest high-tech IT technologies. "Delivering maximum added value to our end customers is our priority," adds UK Marketing Coordinator Chris Watts. "With our international team, we are able to deliver our brands, products and services to nearly 200 million customers within these regions."

TAMRON
Focus on the Future
British Photographic Industry News AWARDS 2022
British Photographic Industry News AWARDS 2023
transcontinenta
WAREHOUSE NIEUW-VENNEP

A united vision: Transcontinenta's UK team, above, are ably supported by staff in their parent company's Netherlands warehouse, below. Making for a fast and convenient resource, it's no wonder the distributor has picked up our BPI News Awards two years running

The Transcontinenta Warehouse team are key to daily operations, handling inbound shipments with efficiency, managing daily incoming containers, pallets and boxes with precision. The team picks over 150 orders daily, the task optimised via cutting-edge Kardex machines, while eco-friendly packaging minimises environmental impact. Over 350 boxes are shipped daily across Europe.

As far as partners seeking to place orders and access key brand and product info goes, its B2B shop remains a fast and convenient resource.

"Our sales team remains strong and stable with three full-time UK Sales Managers and one full time locally based IE Sales Manager supported by two internal sales support administrators," Simon Coleman concludes. "With David Holley retiring at the end of this year, we wish him all the best and thank him for his contribution to our success. As our industry continues to be impacted by both the economy and technological advancements, what remains encouraging is our core customer of the hobbyist/enthusiast continues to invest in their passion."

ZHIYUN Godox Lexar thinkTANK TAMRON hähnel quality accessories peak design

For all your 2025 business needs contact sales@transcontinenta.co.uk or call 0203 966 5947. www.transcontinenta.co.uk

PICK YOUR WINNER IN OUR BPI NEWS TRADE AWARDS

Choose your winners in our photo / video trade awards via email or our social media channels. Here are some suggestions to get things underway...

British Photo&Video Industry News
AWARDS 2025

Which products, services, company or retailer has stood out for you these past 12 months? We'll be announcing the winners next March, but meantime we want your usual nominations for deserved winners. And yes, you can vote for yourselves if that ego is big enough, or vote in more than one category. If suitably inspired, you can send us a list of who you're nominating for each and every one; the more the merrier.

As with last year's nominations for our BPI News Trade Awards, we're offering up a broader range of categories to be more inclusive and provide a wider breadth of recognition.

Our categories awaiting your vote this year – with reminders in brackets of who won last time around – are as follows:

- **Retailer Of The Year** *(past winner: Grays Of Westminster)*
- **Promotion Of The Year** *(previous winner: Swains' 'The Future of Photo')*
- **Product Of The Year** *(past winner: Nikon Z8)*
- **Accessory Of The Year** *(previous winner: Sigma 14mm f/1.4 DG DN Art Lens)*
- **Innovation Of The Year** *(past winner: Shimoda Women's Bag Collection, via MAC Group Europe)*
- **Media Of The Year** *(previous winner: Hahnemühle Digital FineArt Baryta papers)*
- **Printer Of the Year** *(past winner: Epson large format 'P and 'T' series, via the DPS Group)*
- **Consumer Camera Of The Year** *(previous winner: Fujifilm X-S20)*
- **Campaign Of The Year** *(past winner: Tetenal UK becomes Dupli)*
- **Distributor Of The Year** *(previous winner: Transcontinenta UK)*
- **BPI News Special Award For Services To The Industry** *(past winner: Mr Cad's Alex H. Falk)*

So there we have it, get yourselves, your supporters and your customers to send us your nominations in one or all of the above categories!

With our above categories in mind, doubtless you'll be wracking your brain for pro and consumer cameras launched throughout 2024 that could conceivably win our Innovation of the Year and overall Product of the Year categories. Or maybe it could be a lens, a light, a microphone, or even a versatile camera bag that's a deserving winner?

You'll also be recalling the most memorable promotional features printed in our magazine the past 12 months that could conceivably bag Promotion of the Year or Campaign of the Year.

If you need a reminder of what was released or featured when to get the old grey manner in gear, handily we've our Review of the Year starting on page 14, so why not have a browse of that for some ideas.

HOW TO VOTE

Got a winner – or winners – in mind? Please mail us with your choices in as many (or all) categories as you like, to **info@bpinews.co.uk** or message us direct via 'X' (formerly Twitter) where we're **@bpi_news**

The nominees with the most votes are our eventual winners. It's as simple as that! So don't delay, have a think, and don't lose your right to vote!

The closing date for votes is Friday February 21st, 2025.
Winners will be notified and awarded in our April / May edition.

Make contact now before you forget and tell us who/what should win. Get in touch via **info@bpinews.co.uk**, or on 'X' via **@bpi_news**

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SINCE 1926
itsu
eat beautiful
Russell & Bromley
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PEDESTRIAN ZONE
A FUSION OF FRUIT & BOTANICALS. DOWN TO A TEA.
fuzetea

TRAINING A LENS ON 2025

While we don't have a personal window to the future, we can at least attempt to predict how next year will look for the photo and video industry based on the facts currently at our disposal. With the recent Autumn Budget having caused controversy with adjustments to minimum wage and National Insurance contributions for employers, is 2025 shaping up to be particularly tough or a breeze for business?

You only need to read the personal opinions expressed in our trade Review of the Year this issue to find quite contrasting views. What was a successful 12 months for some was a tougher slog for others, and perhaps it's always been thus. This time of year tends to be when we receive the highest volume of returned copies, as various businesses throw in the towel. However, with one eye on the future, forewarned is forearmed, and if we have an inkling of something before it happens, at least preparations can be made.

The recent Autumn Budget gave a view of the financial hole the government finds itself in and how it was seeking to tax its way out of it. Taxes for businesses now include the requirement from April 2025 for companies to pay National Insurance at 15% on salaries above £5K, an increase from the former 13.8% on salaries above £9,100. The belief is that this will swell the country's coffers by raising an additional £25 billion per annum.

At the same time the Employment

Have business advice, opinion or solutions you'd like to share with our community of readers to help

Allowance that enables small businesses to reduce their National Insurance liability by claiming back against their NI bill is increasing from £5K to £10,500. Alongside this, the main rate of corporation tax, paid by businesses on taxable products over £250K, is to remain at 25% until the next election.

Employers are being hit from April 2025 by a rise in the minimum wage payable to those 21+ from £11.44 per hour to £12.21 per hour. Those aged 18 to 20 are also getting a boost from £8.60 to £10 per hour, meaning an increased wage bill all round. Inevitably this has led to grumbles that businesses will have to look for other ways to cut costs, including needing to reduce investment / expansion plans, raise prices for customers, lay off staff or at least restrict wage growth.

MODEST GROWTH PREDICTED

While the UK's economic growth has been flat for a while, the Office For Budget Responsibility predicts that our economy will grow by 2% this year coming and by 1.8% in 2026. At the same time their prediction is that inflation will continue to grow to 2.6% next year, before hopefully falling to 2.3% in 2026. Not massive shifts then, but it seems like the current squeeze on living standards will continue for a little while yet, affecting how much our industry's customers have to spend on their hobbies and passions.

> “Businesses will need to adjust their budgets accordingly, and implement price rises of their own when needed to offset any changes, communicating any price hikes effectively to customers so they understand and accept the reasons behind them.”

SME's have access to business asset disposal relief and rather than this being removed by the current government it now says the relief available on the sale of business assets will remain at 10% this year, rising to 14% next April and to 18% in 2026/27. To help businesses trading on the high street, permanent lower business tax rates have been announced for retail. With the current 75% discount due to expire in April 2025, it is due to be replaced by a permanent discount of 40% up to a maximum of £110K per business, which will be paid for by a higher multiplier on the most valuable properties while the small business tax multiplier will be frozen next year. Businesses will need to adjust their budgets accordingly, and implement price rises of their own when needed to offset any changes, communicating any price hikes effectively to customers so they understand and accept the reasons behind them.

Those businesses in our industry dealing in tech may want to look at the research and development relief that will stay in place and consider allocating resources to innovate products or services. To qualify for R&D relief, a project must seek an advance in a field of science or technology, according to the official government website. This is further defined as something that has physical consequences or demonstrates an increase in overall knowledge, with which R&D costs can be claimed also listed on www.gov.uk. You never know; such a move could just potentially open new revenue streams while boosting competitiveness into the bargain.

Armed with the above information we can work out how the budget announcements may affect us in 2025 and, if applicable and necessary, small businesses should take advantage of the relief rates sooner rather than later. More modest outfits may also save via some of the changes that will be coming into effect. For example, those with fewer than five members of full-time staff on the national living wage won't pay any NI.

On top of the above there are other practical ways we can look at making potential savings such as increasing efficiency when it comes to energy usage over the winter months, installing sensors in less frequently used areas of the business so lights aren't left on permanently even when there is no one in the room, to take just one example. Reviewing the materials we use for packaging and the services we avail ourselves of may also identify areas in which savings can be made, even if we initially believe we've already squeezed a particular fruit 'til the pips squeak.

The quieter months between Christmas and spring are always an opportunity for business leaders and owners to take a breath, step back and examine what we could be doing better. More obviously any lull allows for a restructuring and revamping of our literal shop window to draw in increased sales when customers shake off the winter blues and release the moths from their wallets. Whether we're talking about a high street presence or a refresh of the website and e-commerce solutions. Businesses that have both a strong physical and online presence in tandem are the best equipped to weather any potential economic storms and shifts in the marketplace – and if one aspect is letting down the other, the start of a New Year hopefully provides the motivation to make such adjustments before the year begins in earnest and the weeks are flying by before we know it.

improve our collective lot? Email **info@bpinews.co.uk**, or tag or DM us on 'X' (formerly Twitter) via **@bpi_news**

SHOW SOME LOVE FOR TIPA ‘CAMERAMORE’ CONTEST

The Technical Image Press Association, of which this magazine is a proud member, has launched a new photo contest, open now for entries, and is urging BPI News readers and their customers to get involved. The focus once again is on photographic equipment and the photographers’ relationship with it, with the competition aptly named ‘Cameramore’ (the accent being on ‘amore’).

The gear in the photos can either be old or new, cheap or expensive, with winners potentially receiving 3,000 Euros in prizes. Simply upload your best shots in one, two or all three categories, which are: ‘My Camera and I’, ‘My Camera in Action’ and ‘What’s in my Camera Bag’.

TIPA TECHNICAL IMAGE PRESS ASSOCIATION
TIPA PHOTO CONTEST 2025
CAMERAmore
SHARE YOUR PHOTO GEAR PASSION
ENTRIES CLOSE 15 FEBRUARY 2025

With a closing date of February 15th, 2025, it would be best to submit images now, before you forget. Find the competition at **https://site.picter.com/tipa-cameramore-2025** or links via the main TIPA site and our own website.
www.tipa.com

First Canon RF lens for Tamron

The popular third-party lens manufacturer, distributed to the trade via Transcontinenta UK, has its first lens available for APS-C sensor cameras sporting Canon’s popular RF mirrorless mount in the **Tamron 11-20mm f/2.8 Di III-A1 RXD**.

The fast aperture wide angle zoom is described as lightweight and designed for daily use. Macro shooting is claimed to be possible at 11mm setting thanks to a Minimum Object Distance of 0.15M. Designed for stills and video work, the lens also incorporates an AF drive system with an RXD (Rapid-eXtra-silent stepping Drive) motor unit claimed as exceptionally quiet. With moisture resistant construction and fluorine coating it’s also suited to outdoor shooting. Some 84.2mm in length and weighing 340g, the lens construction comprises 12 elements in 10 groups. Available this month, SRP is £649.99.
www.tamron.eu

GO POTTY FOR LCE ‘POTY’

Following a successful first competition in 2024, London Camera Exchange is once again inviting entries for **Photographer of the Year** for 2025. Sponsored by major photography brands, the lure for entrants aged 18 or over is a share in a £10,000 prize pot, with the overall winner collecting £3K’s worth of LCE vouchers and awards given out at The Photography & Video Show in March. We’re told there were 13,000 entries last time, and both national and specialist media coverage.

For the second year the same winning format is being followed, yet with the addition of a new ‘Emerging Talent’ category open exclusively to photography students. As was the case the first time around, there’s a People’s Choice category, but hurry as the entry deadline is midnight on January 21st, 2025. For more on the above, plus a re-cap of last year’s victorious entries, head to the URL below.
www.poty.lcegroup.co.uk

London Camera Exchange
Photographer of the Year 2025

IN MEMORIAM: JAMIE MATTHEWS, SWAINS INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

It is with deep sadness that Swains announces the loss of its valued team member and colleague, Jamie Matthews, who passed away suddenly on Sunday 1st December, having suffered with his health since September and finally being diagnosed with lung cancer.

Jamie was a dedicated and highly respected member of the Swains sales office team for over 18 years. His contribution and presence will be profoundly missed by all those who had the privilege of working with him.

Jamie was known for his big character and humour, and he enjoyed close relationships with all customers. He will be sorely missed at Swains and will not be forgotten. We extend our heartfelt condolences to Jamie’s family, friends and colleagues at this difficult time.

BPI News is your mouthpiece to the photo trade, so use it! Send your press releases and news items direct to: **info@bpinews.co.uk**

BUILT LIKE A TANK

A camera retailer can never have enough camera bags. Rolling into view in time for 2025 for 'the photographer on the go' are new **Think Tank** backpacks and, yes, rolling cases. The new gear, via distributor Transcontinenta UK, includes the **Think Tank DarkLight Backpack** series, the **Airport Roller Derby V2.0** and the **Airport Navigator V2.0** *(shown)*.

The backpack series is described as premium and features a laser cut MOLLE panel and tactical webbing rails, allowing for the attachment of Think Tank modular pouches or other accessories. Rear access means the gear inside is secure, whether in crowded places or in harsh conditions.

As far as the Airport Roller Derby V2.0 and the Airport Navigator V2.0 are concerned, these updated models provide photographers with access to gear while travelling. The latter provides dual top and front access for seamless retrieval of two camera bodies and lenses, including having the likes of a 70-200mm f/2.8 lens attached. New features of the latest iteration include an 8-wheel system for 360-degree manoeuvrability and enhanced security with lockable zips and a Travel Sentry ID plate. The Airport Roller Derby V2.0 meanwhile is for those carrying heavier loads and has the same 8-wheel configuration plus a reinforced handle and user replaceable wheels among its key features.

Pricing for the above ranges from £174.99 to £419.99.

www.thinktankphoto.com

LOMOGRAPHY DOES THINGS BY HALVES

The analogue film photography fanatic has another splendidly bonkers plastic contraption in the new **Lomourette Half-frame 35mm camera**. Lightweight and portable, due to the set up 72 images can be captured per roll of 35mm film.

The camera comes in three different 'flavours': a Classic Edition in blue/black, a mint green and cream Picnic Edition, plus a Water Lillies Edition adorned with Monet's signature painting. Aimed at photographers of all levels, Lomo reckons the new unit should encourage experimentation. Priced at £65 SRP, the Water Lillies Edition is a tenner more.

www.lomography.com

Lomourette
DIANA F+
LOMOURETTE HALF FRAME

New Samyang lens reveals 'Prima' status

AF 35 / 1.4 P FE
Full Frame E-Mount

There are a couple of new Samyang lenses to talk about this month. First up is the inaugural lens in its new 'Prima' series: the **AF 35mm f/1.4 P FE**. As the suffix in the model name suggests, this one is for users of the likes of the Sony A7C II or ZV-E1, arriving with the claim that it's the lightest 35mm f/1.4 lens for full frame E-mount cameras. The pitch here is that it's an affordable, high-performance lens with a compact and lightweight design at 470g. Minimum focus distance is 0.30 metres, while it's been equipped with weather sealing plus a USB port for future firmware updates. First deliveries are expected in the UK for January 2025.

The second third party lens, aimed at Canon users, is the **AF 12mm F2 RF-S Ultra Wide-Angle Prime Lens**, with the selling point here being that it currently offers the widest angle available in the Canon RF-S lens lineup. Again, this auto focus prime lens is compact at 57.2mm in length and lightweight too, at just 213g, making it suitable to carry anywhere. Construction here comprises three extra-low dispersion 'ED' elements and two aspherical lenses to eliminate chromatic aberration and distortion. Minimum focus distance for this Samyang offering is 0.2 metres and it's also due to arrive in January.

Contact Samyang's UK and Ireland distributor Holdan for more info on the above.

www.holdan.co.uk/brand/Samyang

Canon
EOS
AF 12 / 2 RF-S

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The Photography & Video Show

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